POSITION DESCRIPTION COVER SHEET

REASON FOR THIS POSITION

1. NEW	2. IDENTICAL ADDITION TO THE ESTABLISHED PD NUMBER	3. REPLACES PD NUMBER
☒	☐ NHQSRSSC47011	

RECOMMENDED

4. TITLE	5. PAY PLAN	6. SERIES	7. GRADE
Resource Soil Scientist	**GS**	**0470**	**11**

8. WORKING TITLE *(Optional)*	9. INCUMBENT *(Optional)*
Resource Soil Scientist	

OFFICIAL

10. TITLE

Soil Scientist

11. PP	12. SERIES	13. FUNC	14. GRADE	15. DATE Month	Day	Year	16. I/A	17. CLASSIFIER
GS	**0470**	**51**	**11**				☐ Yes ☐ No	

8. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE *(Agency/Bureau)*

1st	**Natural Resources Conservation Service**	5th	
2nd		6th	
3rd		7th	
4th		8th	

SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of the position and its organizational relationships and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds and that false or misleading statements may constitute violations of such statute or their implementing regulations.

19. SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE	20. DATE	22. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE	23. DATE

21. SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE	24. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE

FACTOR EVALUATION SYSTEM

FACTOR	25. FLD/BMK	26. POINTS	FACTOR	25. FLD/BMK	26. POINTS
1. Knowledge Required	**FL 1-7**	**1250**	6. Personal Contacts	**FL 6-3**	
2. Supervisory Controls	**FL 2-4**	**450**	7. Purpose of Contacts	**FL 7- C**	**180**
3. Guidelines	**FL 3-3**	**275**	8. Physical Demands	**FL 8-2**	**20**
4. Complexity	**FL 4-3**	**150**	9. Work Environment	**FL 9-2**	**20**
5. Scope and Effect	**FL 5-3**	**150**		TOTAL POINTS	**2495**
				GRADE	**GS 11**

CLASSIFICATION CERTIFICATION

I certify that this position has been classified as required by Title 5, US Code, in conformance with standards published by the OPM or, if no published standard applies directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards.

29. SIGNATURE	30. DATE
Darlene Locke	**09/18/2008**

31. NAME AND TITLE

Darlene Locke, Human Resources Specialist, Employment and Classification Team, Washington, D.C.

32. REMARKS:	33. OPM CERTIFICATION NUMBER

References:OPM JFS PROFESSIONAL WORK, NATURAL RESOURCES MGT & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, SEPT 05
Position is FLSA - Exempt.

MASTER RECORD/INDIVIDUAL POSITION DATA

THIS SIDE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CLASSIFIER

A. KEY DATA

1. FUNCTION (1)	2. DEPT CD. /AGCY-BUR-CD. (4)	3. SON (4)	4. MR. NO. (6)	5. GRADE (2)	6. IP NO. (8)
	AG 16				

B. MASTER RECORD

1. PAY PLAN (2)	2. OCC. SERIES (4)	3. OCC. FUNC. CD. (2)	4. OFF. TITLE CD. (5)	5. OFFICIAL TITLE (38)
GS				

6. HQ. FLD. CD. (1)	7. SUP. CD. (1)	8. CLASS STD. CD. (1)	9. INTERDIS. CD. (1)	10. DT CLASS (6)
1 = HQ 2 = FLD	1 = Sup. SGEG 3 = Mgr. SGEG 4 = Sup. CSRA 5 = Mgmt. CSRA 6 = Leader LGEG 8 = All Others	X = New Standard Applied Blank = NA	N = No Y = Interdis	MO DAY YEAR

11. EARLY RET. CD. (1)	12. INACT/ACT (1)	13. DT. ABOL. (6)	14. DT. INACT/REACT (6)	15. AGENCY USE (10)
1 = Primary 2 = Secondary 3 = Foreign Svc. Blank = NA	I = Inactive A = Active	MO DAY YEAR	MO DAY YEAR	

16. INTERDISCIPLINARY SERIES (40) (4) Per Block

17. INTERDISCIPLINARY TITLE CODE (50) (5) Per Block

C. INDIVIDUAL POSITION

1. FLSA CD. (1)	2. FIN. DIS. REQ. (1)	3. POS. SCHED. (1)	4. POS. SENS. (1)	5. COMP. LEV. (4)
E = Exempt N = Nonexempt	0 = None 1 = CD 219 2 = CD 220 3 = SF 278 4 = AD 392 5 = SF 849	A = Sched A B = Sched B C = Sched C 0 = Excepted but not A,B,C	0 = Nonsensitive 1 = Noncritical 2 = Critical Sense	

6. WK. TITLE CODE (4) 7. WK. TITLE (38)

8. ORG. STR. CODE (18)

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th

9. VAC REV CODE (1)
0 = Position Action No Vacancy
A = No Change
B = Lower Grade
C = Higher Grade
D = Different title and/ or series
E = New Position/New FTE

10. TARGET GD.	11. LANG. REQ. (2)	12. PROJ. DTY. IND. (1)	13. DUTY STATION (9) State (2)	City (4)	County (3)	14. BUS. CD. (4)	15. DT. LST. AUDIT (6) MO DAY YEAR	16. PAS. IND. (1)	17. DATE EST. MO DAY YEAR
		Blank = NA Y = Yes						Blank=NA 1 = PAS	

18. GD. BASIS. IND (1)	19. DT.REQ. REC. (6)	20. NTE. DT. (6)	21. POS.ST. BUD (1)
1 = Rev. when vacant 2 = Impact of Person 3 = Sup./SGEG 4 = Sup./Program 5 = RGEG 6 = Policy Analysis G E G 7 = Equipment Devel. Guide 8 = Agency Use 9 = Agency Use ALPHAS = Agency Use	MO DAY YEAR	MO DAY YEAR	Y = Perm N = Other

22. MAIN. REV./CLASS.ACT. CD. (2) *(1st Digit = Activity and 2nd Digit = Results)*

Normal Act	Maintenance Review Act	Results
3	1 = Desk Audit 2 = Sup. Audit 3 = Paper Rev. 4 = PME/Activity Rev.	5 = Desk Audit 6 = Sup. Audit 7 = Paper Rev. 8 = Panel Rev.	1 = No Action Req. 2 = Minor PD Change 3 = New PD Req. 4 = Title Change 5 = Series Change 6 = Pos. Upgrade 7 = Pos. Downgrade 8 = New Pos. 9 = Other

23. DATE EMP. ASGN. (6)	24. DATE ABOL. (6)	25. INACT/ ACT(1)	26. DATE INACT/ REACT (6)	27. ACCTG. STAT. (4)	28. INT. ASGN. SER. (4)	29. AGENCY USE (8)
MO DAY YEAR	MO DAY YEAR	I = Inact. A = Act.	MO DAY YEAR			

30. CLASSIFIER'S SIGNATURE Darlene Lorber

31. DATE 09/18/2008

32. REMARKS

Form AD-332 (Revised 4/86)

STANDARD POSITION DESCRIPTION

Official Title: Soil Scientist
Working Title: Resource Soil Scientist
Classified By: NHQ-HRMD-ECT
Number: NHQRSSC11

Date: September 18, 2008
Classification: GS-470-11
Location: State (Geographical Location)

Note: This is a standard position description and can not be modified without the approval from the Human Resources Management Division, Employment & Classification Team, NRCS, in Washington D.C.

INTRODUCTION

The position is in an assigned state location in support of a soil and water conservation program(s) covering a limited geographical area or socioeconomic/environmental/land uses are relatively uniform. The incumbent serves as resource soil scientist responsible for maintenance, interpretation, and distribution of soil survey information; assisting with conservation planning, environmental assessment, and natural resource management activities; conducting information and education activities related to soils and soil survey; providing training to NRCS employees and other technical specialists; providing support to users of soil survey information; and providing technical review, and guidance in the application of soil survey information throughout the geographical location(s).

MAJOR DUTIES

1. Farm Bill and other Program Assistance (40%)

a. Assists in the development of ranking systems, eligibility criteria, program specific data, and practice applications for CRP, GRP, EQIP, EWP, WRP and other programs. Expertise varies with each program, but includes farmland classification (prime, unique, etc.), wetland identification, and Highly Erodible Land (HEL) determinations. Interprets soil data and makes determinations during the program signup and application periods. Integrates soils and soil survey information with overall program activities.

b. Assists with implementation of the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA). Develops or reviews land evaluation groupings using the Computer Assisted Land Evaluation System and completes the NRCS portion of Farmland Conversion Impact Ratings (forms AD-1006 and CPA-106). Works with consultants, and local, regional, and state government officials in the development of site assessment scoring categories.

c. Assists in the implementation of the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). Establishes and maintains contacts with state, regional, and local government and non-governmental officials interested in partnerships related to agricultural conservation easements from landowners. Serves on the FRPP committee to develop or revise an offer ranking system.

d. Provides technical assistance in program appeals. Serves as a technical soil specialist for highly erodible land, wetland conservation, and conservation compliance. Provides soil knowledge (e.g., assignment of soil erodibility factors and identification of hydric soils) at appeals that are elevated to

the County Farm Service Agency Committee, State Conservationist (Technical Reviews), and the National Appeals Division.

2. Investigations, Interpretations and Data Quality Review (20%)

a. Delineates wetlands following procedures outlined in the Wetland Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or as outlined by the state's MOA workgroup. Recommends changes to hydric soil lists to the State Soil Scientist (SSS). Serves as soils instructor for wetland training such as the COE Regulatory IV course, and National Food Security Act.

b. Provides on-site technical assistance to agency personnel and the public on the interpretation and application of soil survey information related to specific soil, water, air, plant, and animal resource concerns. Assists with or conducts authorized special projects such as high intensity soil surveys, natural resource inventories, Soil Quality and dynamic soil property data collection, and other multi-discipline or multi-agency natural resource studies for conservation planning and area wide projects.

c. Uses geophysical and other technological tools such as Ground Penetrating Radar, Electrical Conductivity and Electromagnetic Induction meters, Calcimeters, permeameters, and infiltrometers and interprets the results. Tests and evaluates new technologies such as the soil quality test kit and soil conditioning index, and makes recommendations regarding applicability in the field.,

d. Evaluates soil properties and predicts response to and of conservation practices and other land management uses, including situations which require integration of scientific principals due to lack of specific guidelines or interpretive criteria.

e. Identifies and documents interpretive needs. Provides assistance and guidance in developing interpretive criteria. Collaborates with technical specialists in related disciplines. Implements interpretive criteria in NASIS. Develops new, unique, and complex soil interpretive groups as needed for tools such as ecological site descriptions and forage suitability groups.

f. Provides assistance and guidance in the maintenance of soil survey data in NASIS, including quality control and data entry. Monitors and updates soil survey data as necessary to meet current needs and initiates export of soil survey data to the soil data warehouse. Downloads or exports soil survey data for users, including customized exports for specific uses. Develops and maintains non-technical soil descriptions. Maintains information in Customer Service Toolkit, Soil Data Viewer, and MS Access databases. Assists users with these databases and with soil report writing tools.

g. Advises MLRA soil survey personnel and assists in soil sampling for laboratory characterization. Locates suitable sites, contacts landowners, coordinates with the Soil Survey Leader and National Soil Survey Laboratory. Identifies and selects sites for sampling benchmark soils.

h. Designs, guides, plans, and conducts soil survey data collection projects such as water table monitoring, temperature studies, and GPR surveys for use in the update or maintenance of soil surveys in coordination with the soil survey leader. Conducts studies on use-dependent, near-surface soil properties to improve interpretations and evaluate soil quality.

3. Training, Education and Liaison Duties (15%)

a. Provides training in soils and soil survey. Designs, develops, and provides training in soil science and the use of soil survey information to NRCS and non-NRCS technical specialists. Training includes principles of soil science, in-field soil property recognition, and use of soil survey information in hardcopy and digital data formats. Trains agency technical specialists and the public in the application of soil interpretations. Identifies soil properties and interpretations needed to improve utility of soil survey information. Training is provided to a wide range of users including NRCS conservation planners, public officials, and university or industrial researchers for research design and data analysis purposes.

b. Designs, develops and provides training in soil science to teachers and students in support of envirothon, land judging and conservation field days. Makes soil displays and monoliths, creates formal presentations, and maintains a photo library.

c. Provides assistance and guidance in development and implementation of customer awareness plans for soil survey products. Establishes and maintains contacts with soil survey user groups.

d. Provides training in new technologies such as in utilizing GIS, GPS and EM technology and trains others in its appropriate use in the field. GIS training includes the use of SSURGO digital soil surveys and Soil Data Viewer within Customer Service Toolkit and stand-alone version.

e. Develops, trains and assists with GIS products and computerized resource assessment tools. Provides training and assistance in development and analysis of GIS products and modeling programs.

f. Serves on NRCS and external committees and special task groups at the state, regional or national level to help formulate and recommend soil and natural resource management related policy changes, improve soil interpretations and management, or refine soil data.

g. Establishes and maintains relationships with federal, state and local agencies to determine needs, and help coordinate and integrate agency programs and activities related to use and application of soil survey information. Attends and participates in state, regional, and national conferences and professional society meetings.

4. Updates Technical Guides and Publications (15%)

a. Organizes, guides, reviews, creates, and maintains material for Field Office Technical Guides in the assigned area. Coordinates changes with the State Soil Scientist and State Technical Guide Committee. Collaborates with other discipline specialists to assure accuracy and consistency of soil survey data in Section II with other parts of the Field Office Technical Guide, including natural resource data, quality criteria, practice standards and conservation practice physical effects.

b. Conducts information activities. Provides assistance and soils information for the accurate delivery of soil information in the form of correspondence, articles, and effective presentations to internal and external users groups. Provides support for technical publications. Assists field offices with the distribution of soil information.

c. Identifies issues, develops, and reviews technical guidance documents for use in the assigned area.

Assists development of statewide policy. Reviews national soil survey standards and procedures and makes recommendations for changes. Emphasizes the state, regional, and local perspective in the review and commentary, develops and reviews/revises fact sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and other publications to address local, regional, and statewide soil issues. Reviews existing interpretations for inaccuracies due to data errors or deficiencies in the interpretive criteria. Provides assistance and guidance to database managers and others to resolve data completeness and data quality issues.

5. Office Reviews and Work Planning (10 %)

a. Serves as a team member for field office quality assurance reviews and appraisals. Reviews field office recognition and incorporation of field observed soils related resource concerns and the proper use of soils information in the application of conservation practices and programs. Recommends necessary training, changes to policies, guidelines, organizational structure, or field office procedures.

b. Participates in soil survey field progress reviews and correlation conferences and provides technical assistance visits on issues related to interpretations needs, maintenance, and delivery of soil survey information and serves as review team member on soil survey field reviews.

c. Coordinates the technical soil services program for the service area. Provides assistance and guidance to local offices and assists in the preparation of statewide plans of operation, business plans, budget plans, long range plans, and training plans related to technical soil services.

d. Reviews and edits soil survey manuscripts. Checks for completeness and consistency of manuscript text and tables.

Performs other duties as assigned.

CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT – Must possess and maintain a valid state motor vehicle operator's license for the type of vehicle(s) operated to perform the duties of this position. This may require the operation of a motor vehicle in both public and private roads during daylight hours and occasionally after dark.

COMP LEVEL – (Designated by state)

EVALUATION FACTORS

1. KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION – LEVEL 1-7 (1250 POINTS)

a. Comprehensive knowledge of the soil survey program as gained through education, training and actual experience in the conduct of soil survey mapping, interpretation, and application in order to provide assistance in delivering products and services that meet requestors' needs.

b. Knowledge of pedology, geology, hydrology, engineering, climatology, biology, soil physics, soil chemistry, conservation planning, and environmental land use planning in order to participate in interdisciplinary teams and adapt scientific knowledge to appropriately interpret soil survey data.

c. Knowledge and understanding of database systems and geographic information systems in order to maintain soil data, manipulate datasets, create reports, and produce custom data formats.

d. Knowledge of instructional techniques in order to develop effective training materials and conduct training.

e. Ability to communicate with others (verbally, TTY, sign language or lip reading) in order to express ideas, convey facts, make effective presentations, and facilitate an open exchange of ideas.

f. Skill in written communication in order to clearly, concisely, and completely describe ideas, facts, and procedures in training materials, popular articles, technical notes, policy and guidance documents, and scientific papers.

g. Knowledge and understanding of federal agricultural programs, local and statewide land use laws, state and federal regulations, field office operations, and associated legal and political processes in order to effectively apply soil survey information.

2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS – LEVEL 2-4 (450 POINTS)

a. The supervisor defines goals and objectives, and commits resources based on statewide business plans and agency strategic plans. The incumbent defines specific activities to meet objectives, creates work plans, develops methods, and apportions time spent on various phases of work.

b. Incumbent works in a team setting and exercises initiative in collaborating with colleagues to identify specific issues and define solutions in a team concept. Many teams function autonomously. The team concept is dynamic and expected to change. The incumbent is expected to perform various roles in the team as the situation demands.

c. The incumbent is a technical authority and technical work is normally accepted without review, except in cases where the technical work has significant policy implications. When work is reviewed, it is reviewed with regard to policy, effectiveness, and overall contribution to the Soil Survey Division and Agency mission.

3. GUIDELINES - LEVEL 3-3 (275 POINTS)

Primary guidelines are set forth in NRCS policy and NCSS technical standards. Most guidelines exist in the form of policy statements or general instructions. Established policy and guidelines do not exist in all cases. Incumbent must be able to interpret and apply available guidance for adaptation to specific problems or issues to conservation program(s).

4. COMPLEXITY – LEVEL 4-3 (150 POINTS)

The position involves coordination of products, services, and activities within NRCS and between NRCS and other federal and non-federal agencies and organizations to solve situations. Demands for products and services are normally consistent throughout the geographical area. Data manipulations, interpretations, and presentation modes are sometimes needed to satisfy needs. The incumbent deals with topics from agronomy to engineering, and from traditional hardcopy manuscripts to Web-based products.

5. SCOPE AND EFFECT – LEVEL 5–3 (150 POINTS)

a. Scope - The position affects residential and non-residential land owners, public and private groups and organizations, USDA agencies, and others throughout the state. Investigates, analyzing, and evaluating problems and situations involving a variety of soil and program conditions.
The incumbent's recommendations are a basis for regulatory or program enforcement and major land use decisions affecting public expenditures.

b. Effect - The work has an impact on soil and water conservation program application in the assigned locations for soil survey policies, USDA program activities, public policy and environmental regulation in the assigned area.

6. & 7. PERSONAL AND PURPOSE OF CONTACTS – LEVEL – 3C (180 POINTS)

a. Personal - Contacts are with private citizens, local, regional, and state government officials, NRCS employees, and employees in other USDA and USDI agencies. Contacts occur individually, in small groups, and in large public forums, either informally or as part of formal hearings or adversarial proceedings.

b. Purpose - Contacts are for the purpose of delivering soil survey data and information, representing USDA and NRCS policies and decisions, and providing training and influencing others in the use of soil survey data and interpretive information. In some cases, contacts are necessary to resolve controversial issues.

8. PHYSICAL DEMANDS – LEVEL 8-2 (20 POINTS)

The work occurs in both outside and office environments. Outside activities involve strenuous walking over steep terrain and lifting and carrying of moderately heavy soil samples, tools, and specialized scientific equipment that weigh approximately 50 pounds. The incumbent must be able to operate four-wheel drive vehicles and other motorized equipment.

9. WORK ENVIRONMENT – LEVEL 9-2 (20 POINTS)

The work includes occasional contact with poisonous plants, snakes, spiders, and disease carrying insects when working outdoors, and everyday risks and discomforts outside extreme weather changes.

Total Points = 2495 (Range GS-11– 2755-3150)

This position is determined to be exempt from the provisions in the FLSA as defined in 5CFR 551.